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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 25 June 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you that five days after the ceasefire was declared in the Gaza Strip, Israeli occupying forces committed yet another unprovoked military assault against the West Bank town of Nablus, threatening the fragile ceasefire and inciting further violence. In this regard and as we have called for repeatedly, we reaffirm the imperative of extending the ceasefire to the West Bank, as the Gaza Strip and the West Bank constitute one geographical unit — the Occupied Palestinian Territory — and, as such, Israeli military operations and attacks in either area have negative repercussions. Time and time again, such illegal, irresponsible and violent Israeli actions have served only to perpetuate the cycle of death and destruction on both sides and undermine all efforts to achieve calm and promote the peace process.

With regard to the recent attack in Nablus, in the early morning hours of Monday, 23 June 2008, Israeli occupying forces raided the student dormitory room of Iyad Khanfar and Tareq Abu Ghali, fourth year art students at Al-Najah University in Nablus, and opened fire at the two unarmed students, riddling their bodies with bullets. Israeli occupying forces then proceeded to surround the adjacent Salous and Masri buildings at 1.30 in the morning, shooting and firing sound bombs throughout the night, causing fear, panic and terror to spread among the civilian population in Nablus. The occupying forces also arrested five other men during this brutal incursion. In this regard, it is important to note that, despite the fact that Palestinian police have controlled Nablus since November 2007, Israel, the occupying Power, has never ceased its deadly and destructive incursions and its arbitrary arrests in Nablus and surrounding areas, undermining any Palestinian efforts, under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas, to restore law and order and to promote calm.

In addition, in the early morning hours of today, Israeli occupying forces opened random fire at an 80-year-old farmer as he tended to his field in the city of

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Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip. He was seriously wounded and taken to a hospital for urgent treatment. Also today, Israel's Defence Minister announced that Israel would close the Gaza crossings indefinitely, a clear violation of the ceasefire agreement reached by the parties and one that will only result in the further impoverishment and humanitarian suffering of the Palestinian civilian population.

These alarming incidents of violence prove once again that the occupying Power's blatant violations of Palestinian rights, which it carries out with impunity, obstruct all efforts to achieve calm and threaten the ceasefire reached as a result of the intensive and commendable efforts by the Egyptian Government on 19 June. Clearly, Israeli military incursions and killings in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are not only grave violations of human rights, international law and international humanitarian law, but are also totally contrary to the efforts to promote a peace between the two sides.

The international community must hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for its breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights law in order to protect the Palestinian civilian population and encourage an atmosphere of calm and stability. Israel cannot continue to preach about its own security when it continuously violates the security of the entire Palestinian population under its occupation and jeopardizes the ceasefire. The Security Council, in particular, must uphold its Charter responsibilities and act to bring an end to all of the appalling crimes being committed by the occupying Power in all areas of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 316 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 18 June 2008 (A/ES-10/420-S/2008/404), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer